

HEARD & SCENE

Upping the Game: Celebrity Charades

By STEFANIE COHEN

Actors and attorneys have more in common than they appear. Most actors can't get through their career without playing a slick prosecutor at least once, and trial lawyers have to pretend like they believe their clients, at least in front of juries.

But the two groups rarely hang out. On Monday night, at the annual LAByrinth Theater Company fundraiser, two perfectly respectable attorneys, event chairmen **Judd Burstein** and **Jeffrey Horwitz**, competed in a fierce game of charades with a crew of professional actors, including **Bobby Cannavale**, **Rose Byrne**, **Jill Hennessy**, **Zoe Kazan**, **Josh Charles**, **Justin Long**, **Amanda Seyfried**, **Rachel Dratch**, **Taran Killam** and **Jesse Martin**.

Mr. Charles, quickly channeling the HBO series "The Sopranos," was one of the standouts, leading his team to victory, while **Cynthia Rowley** nailed guess after guess. Ms. Seyfried and Mr. Long, grinding on the floor with abandon, helped their team win the dance-off portion of the evening.

Mr. Burstein, who runs his own firm, and Mr. Horwitz, a partner at Proskauer Rose, held their own. Plus, they raised about \$250,000 for the theater troupe by inviting their coterie of attorneys to the event, held at Capitale. The money will go toward LAByrinth's season: three plays a year at the downtown Bank Street Theater. Past shows have included "The Mother—r With the Hat" by Stephen Adly Guirgis and "Atmosphere of Memory," by David Bar Katz.

"There's a lot of similarity between acting and being a trial lawyer," said Mr. Burstein. "The key is authenticity. People have to believe you. You have to know how to command a courtroom, like a stage, and make the jury believe, through your actions, that you are intellectually honest so they can trust you."

His team didn't win. And despite the glut of lawyerly television out there, he



Dustin Wayne Harris/Patrick McMullan (3)



Clockwise from above: **Jesse Martin**, **Callie Thome** and **Yul Vazquez**; **Bobby Cannavale** and **Rose Byrne**; and **Shannon Cabbell**, **Brian Roff** and **Melissa Dougherty**.



couldn't think of one that properly depicts the litigious life. "Court is nowhere nearly as exciting as TV shows make it out to be," he said.

Mr. Burstein joined the LAByrinth board because he liked the idea of a group of

writers and actors working together to create art. "They have a family feel here, and you can see it," he said.

Eric Bogosian, a member of the company, put it another way.

"We're not a comedy

troupe, we don't make musical theater, we don't do ballet. We do drama. We're dramatists," he said. "We write the best plays we can and write as hard as we can. I can't think of any other company as good as we are."